



U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Eastern District of California

1130 O Street, Room 3654
 Fresno, California 93721

559/498-7272
 Fax 559/498-7432

For Immediate Release
 April 15, 2004

SEVEN INDICTED FOR DEALING HEROIN

FRESNO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today's indictment of eight individuals on heroin trafficking charges. The indictment was returned by a federal grand jury sitting in Fresno. The charged individuals are:

ROBERTO VARGAS LOPEZ, aka "Compa," age 46 of Fresno;
 ELIAS VALENCIA HERNANDEZ, aka "Chapparro" aka "La Pistola," age 20 of Fresno;
 ANTONIO GUTIERREZ GOMEZ, aka "Spooky Spooky," age 20 of Fresno;
 JOSE CARLOS ALVAREZ, age 33 of San Jose;
 FRANCISCA REYNA ROMERO, aka "Lorena," age 50 of Madera
 LORENA DELAPAZ ROMERO, aka "Lori," age 29 of Madera
 ROSEMARIE "ROSIE" ALVAREZ, age 45 of Madera

Each of the defendants are charged with conspiring to distribute heroin, and to possess it with the intent to distribute, between October 1, 2003 and March 23, 2004. The indictment alleges that one kilogram or more of heroin was involved in the conspiracy. If proven, that allegation subjects each of the defendants to a mandatory ten year federal prison term. ROBERTO VARGAS LOPEZ and ELIAS VALENCIA HERNANDEZ are charged with the possession of one kilogram or more of heroin, with the intent to distribute, between March 20 and 23, 2004. FRANCISCA REYNA ROMERO, aka "Lorena," and her daughter LORENANA DELAPAZ ROMERO, aka "Lori," are both charged with possessing unspecified amounts of heroin on March 23, 2004 and February 24, 2004. Those charges each carry a maximum term of twenty years in federal prison.

The case was investigated through the joint efforts of the Fresno High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) task force, Madera Narcotics Enforcement Team (MADNET), and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

Madera County Assistant District Attorney Eric Wyatt has been appointed as a Special Assistant United States Attorney in connection with this prosecution. Mr. Wyatt and Assistant United States Attorney Kevin Rooney will be prosecuting this case in federal court in Fresno.

The charges in the indictment are only allegations and each defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

A copy of this news release is available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae/home>, select Press Releases.

